

ELI DARLING.

[To accompany bill H. R. 631.]

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DECEMBER 19, 1856.

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Mr. DICKSON, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, made the following

REPORT.

*The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the petition of Eli Darling, an employé at the navy yard, Brooklyn, New York, having had the same under consideration, beg leave to report:*

That from the evidence presented to the committee, it appears that Eli Darling was employed at the navy yard, Brooklyn, New York, as a dock builder at the time of receiving the injury; that he had been so employed for many years; that he was a sober, industrious, and worthy man; it also appears, that while so employed in driving piles, a splinter was thrown from the pile by the force of the battering hammer, striking Mr. Darling in the face, most dreadfully lacerating the flesh, destroying both eyes, and disfiguring his person. This calamity occurred on the seventh day of October, 1834. Since which time he has been not only totally blind, but otherwise disabled from injuries to other parts of his body, received at the same time, and from the same cause by which he lost his eyes; and while the committee would not advise any change in the general policy of the government in providing a limited and scanty support to those who are injured or disabled in its service, as regularly commissioned officers or enlisted seaman or marine, they conceive there is no danger in so far departing from the rules, in certain meritorious cases, as to preclude from the care of the government all persons in its service who do not happen to be entered upon its rolls for a series of years, according to law, rules, and regulations of the navy. Cases may occur where a volunteer or a laborer may be as richly entitled to the bounty of the government for injuries received in its service, as any individual covered by the mantle of the law; and such a case is presented by the petitioner, Eli Darling, who was a sober, industrious, and worthy mechanic, employed by the government for a series of years prior to the calamity which befel him—a calamity of such a nature and magnitude as to excite the commiseration and sympathy of every feeling heart. All cases of a like character must be brought to the consideration of Congress, and

tried and passed upon their intrinsic merits. The committee entertain the opinion that no injurious precedents would be offered, nor any pretexts furnished for abuse in after time; and taking into consideration the fact, that in the case of James Jones, an employé as rigger, not enrolled or enlisted as one of those meritorious cases where the government may and ought to interpose to save from intense suffering by poverty one who was made helpless while in the service of his country, by an unforeseen accident, that the same parental care may be extended to Mr. Darling; and therefore respectfully offer a bill for his relief, and ask its passage.